

# Special Session

<b>Agenda Item #</b>	3
<b>Meeting Date</b>	July 2, 2007
<b>Prepared By</b>	Suzanne Ludlow, Community and Government Liaison
<b>Approved By</b>	Barbara B. Matthews, City Manager

<b>Discussion Item</b>	Resolution Recognizing the 10 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Takoma Park Unification (July 1, 1997)
<b>Background</b>	The City of Takoma Park was previously incorporated in a location such that two-thirds of the city was in Montgomery County and one-third of the city was in Prince George's County. Over the years, the city's division by the county line became problematic and expensive for Takoma Park residents. After many years of lobbying, the City won the right to hold a binding referendum to "unify" the city, placing all of the municipality into one county. On November 5, 1995, the residents voted to change the county line so that all of Takoma Park would be in Montgomery County. The change became effective on July 1, 1997.
<b>Policy</b>	The City of Takoma Park recognizes persons who serve and assist the Takoma Park community, and enjoys celebrating successes.
<b>Fiscal Impact</b>	n/a
<b>Attachments</b>	Draft Resolution Resolution 1997-44
<b>Recommendation</b>	Approve resolution.
<b>Special Consideration</b>	

Introduced by:

**CITY OF TAKOMA PARK, MARYLAND  
RESOLUTION 2007 -**

**Resolution Recognizing the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Takoma Park Unification,  
July 1, 1997**

WHEREAS, in 1978, Sammie Abbott, a candidate for Mayor, included in his platform the idea of unifying Takoma Park in one county; and

WHEREAS, after 17 years of lobbying by many dedicated Takoma Park residents, Governor Schaefer signed House Bill 1090 into law, providing for a binding referendum regarding altering the Montgomery County/Prince George's County border so as to place all of Takoma Park into one county; and

WHEREAS, on November 5, 1995, Takoma Park residents voted to place all of Takoma Park into Montgomery County; and

WHEREAS, on July 1, 1997, the county line was changed and Takoma Park was unified in Montgomery County.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Council of the City of Takoma Park remembers and recognizes the years of work of many residents and elected officials to pass the State Legislation to permit unification.

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Council of the City of Takoma Park remembers and recognizes the many staff members of the City of Takoma Park, Prince George's County, Montgomery County, the State of Maryland and the Maryland-National Park and Planning Commission who helped facilitate the County change with minimal disruption to residents or City functions.

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Council of the City of Takoma Park hereby celebrates ten years of "One City, One County."

ADOPTED THIS 2<sup>nd</sup> DAY OF JULY, 2007.

ATTEST:

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Jessie Carpenter  
City Clerk

Introduced By: Mayor Sharp

**RESOLUTION #1997-44**

**EXPRESSING APPRECIATION TO TAKOMA PARK COMMUNITY MEMBERS AND CITY STAFF FOR THEIR EFFORTS RELATED TO UNIFICATION**

**WHEREAS,** on July 1, 1997, the City of Takoma Park, Maryland, was unified into Montgomery County after 100 years of being split between two counties; **AND**

**WHEREAS,** implementing unification required a great deal of time and effort on the part of many people, especially the Takoma Park City Staff; **AND**

**WHEREAS,** the unification was accomplished smoothly and with minimal disruption to citizens or City functions.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, THAT** the Council of the City of Takoma Park, Maryland, on behalf of the Citizens of Takoma Park, thanks all City Staff for their work in support of unification, especially those who assisted with the ceremony marking unification; **AND**

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, THAT** the Council especially thanks Suzanne Ludlow, Planning Director, and Lisa Schwartz, Senior Planner, for directing and implementing the planning of the myriad of changes required by unification; **AND**

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, THAT** the Council especially thanks Erwin Mack, of the Takoma-Langley Commercial District Management Authority; and Lt. Cynthia Creamer and Sgt. Edward Coursey of the Takoma Park Police Department, for their efforts related to unification observances at the Hampshire-Langley Shopping Center; **AND**

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, THAT** the Council thanks City Administrator Beverly Habada for her leadership in the implementation of this monumental task.

**ADOPTED** this 28th day of July, 1997.

# Takoma Park's Coun

## Takoma Park's Countdown to Unification

By Lucy Keyser

**1978:** Sammie A. Abbott, a candidate for mayor, includes in his platform the issue of unifying the city in one county after learning through door-to-door campaigning that many residents favor it. He loses the election by eight votes to incumbent Mayor John D. Roth.

**June 1980:** Mr. Abbott, elected mayor in March in his second run, gauges interest in the unification issue through a Citizens Volunteer Talent Bank survey in the city Newsletter, which he edits. "Unification of city into Montgomery County" turns out to be the most popular topic in the City Affairs category and one of the most popular in the entire survey, behind environmental recycling, commercial revitalization and historic preservation.

**Summer 1981:** Mr. Abbott asks the city's representatives in Annapolis to put all of Takoma Park in Montgomery County. In the Newsletter, he hits the double taxation issue hard and notes "Prince George's gives us practically nothing" — \$40,000 — compared to tax rebates Montgomery County gives the city, about \$226,000.

Mr. Abbott figures Takoma Park is a \$1.3 million benefit to Prince George's County and he'd like to see Montgomery give land assessed at that amount to Prince George's in exchange for its share of Takoma Park. He denies charges he favors Montgomery for its elitist appeal. "As far as snobism, hell, it's just the opposite. Montgomery County is spending money like hell in wealthy areas."

**July:** Mr. Abbott's proposal draws laughs and controversy. State Del. Thomas Mooney, who lives in the Prince George's side of the city, says, "It sounds like a political 'Bob and Carol and Ted and Alice.' What are we going to have? Political wife swapping?"

P.G. Executive Larry Hogan says, "It's just talk . . . We don't put much credence in it." He sees it as the city's way to get more money from the county. Later, however, he will issue a statement saying he takes no position on a unification bill. — "...if it is truly the desire of the residents of Prince George's portion of Takoma Park to live within the boundaries of Montgomery County, then they should be offered that opportunity through the referendum process."

**September:** Del. Stewart Bainum (MC) introduces a Takoma Park unification bill in Annapolis, PG/MC 16-82. Mr. Bainum envisions some sort of land swap — finding another Montgomery County area near the border that wants to become part of Prince George's to compensate for lost revenue. Mr. Mooney calls Mr. Bainum's proposal "ridiculous, odious and reprehensible." "Do we get part of Gaithersburg?" he asks.

**December:** Mr. Mooney reports that of 2,218 registered voters in the Prince George's part of the city, about 700 have returned a survey he mailed them and they are evenly split on unifying in Montgomery County.

**Feb. 25, 1982:** Montgomery County delegates hold a public hearing on Mr. Bainum's bill, which would lead to consolidation of all of the city into Montgomery County and require a referendum vote by only Prince George's voters in the city.

**March 8:** A City Council motion supports Mr. Bainum's bill, with the proviso that four public hearings be held and a

task force study potential problems of unification.

**April:** Montgomery delegates approve the bill, Prince George's delegates kill it, 14-7.

**May:** Citizens for a Referendum to Unite Takoma Park in One County is founded by residents on the Prince George's side of the city. They promote a binding referendum to give citizens of Takoma Park the choice of unifying in either county. Their goals are to educate voters, organize support and work with city, county and state officials for passage of a referendum bill. Dues are \$1. Coordinators are Sherry McMahon, Brenda Freeman and Jan Schwartz. President is Larry Hush.

**June:** Because of a negative vote by the Montgomery County school board on the possible closure of Takoma Park Junior High, some residents ask the city to study the possibility of seceding from Montgomery and Prince George's counties to create a city school system.

**July 5:** In the city's July 4th parade, Citizens for a Referendum drive a van that carries the signs "County Line Movers," "Basic to Democracy is the Right to Vote: Let the City Vote on Unity," and the group's impossibly long name. Ms. Schwartz recalls that the parade's announcer misses their point, saying the van was donated by "County Line Movers."

**August:** Citizens for a Referendum uses nearly a full page in the city Newsletter to report it has 97 members, answer tax and education questions on unification, ask for more support and note progress toward unification: State Sen. Arthur Dorman and Del. Pauline Menes have sent a draft bill for a referendum to state and county officials for review.

**Sept. 13:** A City Council motion endorses a new bill for a referendum to unite the city into Montgomery County.

**Sept. 20:** The city sponsors a hearing on unification at City Hall. Elected state and county officials from both counties attend. Mr. Bainum describes his next bill for a referendum to unite the city in Montgomery County. About 75 residents turn out for the hearing and 17 speak, all favoring a referendum. Most cite benefits of lower taxes and better schools.

**Nov. 2:** The city's advisory straw ballot for its Prince George's County residents asks, "Do you want the opportunity to vote on unity of Takoma Park in a binding referendum?" The results: 970 for, 186 against. About half the 2,221 eligible voters cast a ballot.

**Dec. 2:** The Montgomery County state delegation schedules a hearing on a new unification bill, MC/PG 12-83 in the County Council chambers. The bill provides for unification into Montgomery County through a referendum. Mr. Bainum, now a state senator, introduces the bill, which has six co-sponsors in the Montgomery delegation and two delegate co-sponsors in the Prince George's delegation.

**February 1983:** In the Newsletter, an editorial ad by WRC-TV Channel 4 encourages the legislature to schedule a referendum in 1983 to unite the city into one county and cites the straw vote as evidence the residents want to unite.

City officials and Citizens for a Referendum lobby for other endorsements and support through letters (Mr. Abbott sometimes pens his in magnificent calligraphy), phone calls and personal visits to Annapolis, always citing the favorable results of the November 1982 straw vote.

Montgomery County Executive Charles Gilchrist supports the bill, as does the Montgomery County chapter of the Mary-

land Municipal League, the Montgomery Journal, the Prince George's Journal, The Washington Post, and TV Channels 5 and 9.

**Feb. 14:** Montgomery County delegates vote 14-5 for the unification referendum bill.

**Feb. 22:** The Prince George's Journal reports that P.G. Bi-County Committee Chairman Frank Pesci had a state trooper waiting to remove Mr. Abbott if he became too rowdy at a meeting on the cost of unification, but Mr. Abbott does not attend. Depending on who does the analysis, the cost to Prince George's of unification into Montgomery County ranges from "a wash" to \$1.2 million, the latter figure from Prince George's legislative liaison Royal Hart.

**March:** The Prince George's Bi-County Committee approves the bill 4-1.

**March 17:** Montgomery County senatorial delegation unanimously approves the unification bill.

**April 1:** Prince George's County House Delegation sends unification bill to a summer study commission after twice voting 9-9. "Exactly what this (the summer study) means is not clear," a Citizens for Referendum flier notes.

Sticking points are the protection of the two liquor stores on the Prince George's side of the city (although the Montgomery delegation had agreed to grandfather the stores in) and a Montgomery amendment to put the Prince George's section of the city into Montgomery's 20th District.

## Straw poll favors unification

Supporters are heartened: the vote was three short of a majority, better than last year's 2-1 vote against the bill by the Prince George's delegation.

**April 4:** Del. Frank Pesci urges P.G. Delegation Chairman Buzz Ryan to put together the task force as soon as possible and recommends appointees. He suggests the force's final report should be completed no later than Nov. 1, 1983.

**October:** A task force appointed to carry out the study meets once, is instructed not to discuss unification and schedules no further meetings.

**Dec. 13:** Two new referendum bills would allow the entire city to vote. The Bi-County Committee of the Prince George's delegation holds hearings on PG/MC 12-84 (a bill by Mr. Bainum for the Prince George's side of the city to vote on unifying in Montgomery County) and PG/MC 4-84 (a bill by Del. Thomas Mooney for the Montgomery side to vote on unifying in Prince George's County). Prince George's legislative liaison Royal Hart says the county has no position yet on the legislation.

In a letter to the committee in support of PG/MC 12-84, Larry Hush quotes Parris Glendening as saying the impact of the change would not be important to county finances and that financial considerations should not be a factor in determining whether Takoma Park votes on unity. Most testimony favors the bills.

**Jan. 21, 1984:** "Walk The Line," a publicity event sponsored by Citizens for a Referendum, traces the county boundary line that divides the city. About 100 marchers, led in two groups by Gene

Freeman and Jan Schwartz, start at opposite ends of the line and meet in the middle. The stunt gets wide media coverage on the determination to push the two referendums on unification through the state legislature.

**Jan. 25:** Takoma Park officials denounce the task force, which wasn't allowed to deal directly with the unification issue but was urged to work on issues to ease the city's bi-county problems.

**Feb. 14:** Labor, civil rights and religious groups hold a news conference at City Hall to announce support for the two unification bills. Supporters include Sligo Adventist Church, the Metropolitan Washington AFL-CIO, Local 400 of the United Food and Commercial Workers, the Montgomery County NAACP, Gray Panthers, Fire Chief Roger McGary, Police Chief A. Tony Fisher, Maryland chapter of the AFSCME, the mayors of Laurel and Fairmont Heights and many others.

The task force created by the Prince George's delegation issues a 31-page report that notes most of the city's bi-county problems can be solved by unification but that the same problems can also be cured by increased county subsidies, bi-county agreements and no less than 16 changes in state and county laws.

**Feb. 17:** Prince George's County Council Chairman Floyd Wilson endorses both referendum bills, and favors unification in Prince George's.

**Feb. 28:** The P.G. Bi-County Committee OKs the bill for a referendum on unification in Prince George's but won't approve the bill for unification in Montgomery until it can revise language protecting the two liquor stores.

**February:** Montgomery County delegates vote 11-3 for both unification bills. Montgomery County senators unanimously pass the bill for unification into Montgomery County. The delegation adopts language to let the two liquor stores stay open.

**March 2:** Prince George's County Executive Parris Glendening, in a letter to the county's delegation, urges rejection of both bills, citing financial consequences, possible closure of Carole Highlands Elementary School and fear of setting a precedent for other split cities.

**March 15:** The Prince George's Municipal Association votes 18-10 to endorse both bills.

**March 16:** Prince George's delegates vote 14-1 for PG/MC 4, the bill for unifying into Prince George's. In a 12-5 vote, the delegation kills PG/MC 12, which would allow the city's P.G. residents to vote on unifying in Montgomery County.

**March:** Both Montgomery and P.G. Senate delegations approve PG/MC 4-84.

**March 27:** The House votes 87-13 for PG/MC 4, the bill for a referendum of Montgomery voters to unify into Prince George's. But the bill dies with five votes from Prince George's senators in the Senate Constitutional and Public Law Committee after Sen. Thomas V. "Mike" Miller — chair of the P.G. County senate delegation — reportedly orders senators to vote against the bill. Despite the loss, Mayor Abbott says he is still "fighting mad" and notes "every year we come a little bit closer." He encourages supporters to "escalate the pressure."

**Jan. 10, 1985:** A panel of state and county officials hears citizen testimony on a variety of bi-county problems in Takoma Park. Mr. Hart assures that Mr. Glendening supports the bill that would give the city independent zoning authority.

**Jan. 18:** The P.G. House delegation

# down to Unification

votes 18-0, killing the unification bill MC/PG 5-85 and the zoning bill, MC/PG 6-85. The vote virtually ends any hope for its passage this session. The votes are taken when several supporters of the city, including Dels. Menes and Maloney, were out of the room. Mr. Bainum, the bill's sponsor, says P.G. delegates have acted too hastily and hints that Montgomery delegates may not be cooperative the next time Prince George's delegates "need something from us." Del. Tom Mooney says this rejection will kill the unification issue forever.

**March:** The Montgomery delegation backs off using a college tuition bill (favored by the P.G. delegation) as leverage for P.G. delegates' votes on unification. The bill, introduced by the P.G. delegates and Mr. Dorman, would let all residents of Takoma Park attend Montgomery College and pay in-county tuition.

**March 15:** The delegation votes 12-2 in favor of the unification bill, already killed by the P.G. delegation. The tuition bill passes, to take effect in the fall semester of 1985.

**July:** A 4-3 City Council vote ousts Mr. Abbott as editor of the city's *Newsletter*.

**Sept. 9:** The City Council adopts ballot wording for an advisory referendum in the city elections to gauge the support of voters for unifying into one county. All voters will be asked if the two sections should be unified in one county. Prince George's city voters will be asked if the P.G. section should become Montgomery and the Montgomery voters will be asked if their side should become part of Prince George's.

**Nov. 4:** Mr. Abbott speaks to the Prince George's Chamber of Commerce and wins support from the group's legislative committee, 19-1, to support unification.

**Nov. 5:** The city's advisory referendum shows strong support for unification into Montgomery County. Prince George's residents vote 605-192 in favor of unification and 571-223 that Prince George's side become Montgomery County.

## Political candidates line up behind Takoma Park

Voters on the Montgomery side favor unification 1,565-217 and rejected unification in Prince George's 1,534-217. City voters also elect a new mayor, Stephen DelGiudice, by just seven votes in a race against Mr. Abbott.

Edward F. Sharp is elected as a council member and Councilmember Lynne Bradley is re-elected.

On the same day as the city's elections, the Prince George's Bi-County Committee holds a hearing on PG/MC 19-1986, the next year's unification bill. At the hearing, Mr. Hart says P.G. residents oppose unification.

**Nov. 19:** Ms. Bradley tells the Prince George's Bi-County Committee, "We are back" -- that the "Takoma Park 5,000" (roughly the number of P.G. residents in the city) are united to seek unification regardless of who they supported for mayor.

**November:** Both the Montgomery and the Prince George's chapters of the Maryland Municipal League vote to support the next unification bill, PG/MC 19-86.

**Dec. 5:** Spurred by the results of the

unification advisory referendum, former Mayor Abbott and John Dunn, a P.G. city resident, organize "One City, One County," to pick up where Citizens for a Referendum left off. Committee hearings are under way in the new legislative session and Mr. Abbott wants to keep the momentum going.

**January 1986:** Unification bill PG/MC 19-86, sponsored by Mr. Bainum and Del. Diane Kirchenbauer, would provide for a binding referendum that would ask Prince George's voters if they want to be unified in Montgomery and Montgomery voters if they want to be unified in Prince George's County. Another bill, PG/MC 20-86, would give the city independent zoning authority.

Mayor DelGiudice writes to the governor, state legislators and county elected officials asking for their support on the unification bill. He and City Council members also go to Annapolis to lobby legislators. One City, One County launches a letter-writing campaign and plans a rally in Annapolis on Feb. 17. All the letters cite the results of the Nov. 5 advisory referendum.

In March, the city hires a professional lobbyist, Bruce Bereano. The Prince George's County Council opposes both bills. An editorial in the Prince George's Journal calls the unification bill an over-reaction to problems that have better solutions.

**1986 legislative session:** The P.G. delegation's Bi-County Committee gives the bill an unfavorable recommendation and it is defeated by a majority of the delegation, although seven members (including Ms. Menes, Mr. Mooney and Mr. Maloney) vote for it, more than last year. The Montgomery delegation approves the bill.

**Summer, Fall 1986:** Once City, One County polls all candidates for county council and state legislature in Prince George's and Montgomery counties on their unification position. Of 89 candidates responding, 87 say they favor unification. A meet-the-candidates party is held Oct. 19 at Councilmember Bradley's home and about 30 candidates show up to pledge their support.

**1987 legislative session:** Delegate Sheila Hixson (Montgomery) sponsors MC/PG 3-87, another bill for a referendum on unification. In January, the P.G. County Council refuses 4-2 to support it, saying there are too many questions about costs.

The Montgomery County delegation approves the bill but the P.G. delegation votes 16-3 to kill it, with the understanding the issue will be studied during the summer. The focus of this summer study is a proposal that the two counties consider a land swap: Prince George's would hand over its portion of Takoma Park and Montgomery would relinquish a portion of the 2,000-acre proposed Konterra development near Laurel. The study fizzled; the Konterra owners were not interested in the swap.

**1988 legislative session:** Ms. Hixson again files a unification bill, PG/MC 5-88, but no action is taken.

**1989 legislative session:** Unification bill MC/PG 12-89 is sponsored by members of both Montgomery and P.G. delegations but fails to go anywhere.

**1990:** Mayor DelGiudice runs for P.G. County Council and wins the District 2 seat in a write-in campaign. Mr. Sharp is appointed mayor to replace Mr. DelGiudice. Another unification bill is offered by the two counties' delegations during the legislative session but is withdrawn.

**Dec. 15, 1990:** Sammie A. Abbott dies

after an illness.

**January 1991:** Kathy Porter is appointed to the council in Ward 7 to fill Mr. Sharp's seat. One of Mr. Sharp's goals is to improve tax rebates to the city from Montgomery and Prince George's counties.

**1991 legislative session:** Another unification bill, MC/PG 16-91, is offered and withdrawn.

**July:** The city is redistricted to provide for six council wards and a mayor.

**1992 legislative session:** Another unification bill is offered and withdrawn.

**1993 legislative session:** Another unification bill is filed by members of both counties' delegations. The bill provides that the two liquor stores in Prince George's would remain under the authority of the P.G. County Board of License Commissioners. The bill fails in the P.G. Bi-County Committee.

**October:** All of 15 candidates for mayor and city council seats pledge to support unification.

## Overwhelming vote for unification

**November:** The City Council, led by Mayor Ed Sharp, unanimously adopts a resolution favoring unification. He and council members lobby state and county politicians for their support on unification bill PG-MC12-94 (House bill 1090). The Newsletter says city officials see a window of opportunity for the bill because Prince George's County Executive Parris Glendening will be running for governor and may be willing to support unification as a vote-getting issue.

**Nov. 30:** In a huge boost for unification, the Prince George's County Council recommends 5-3 that the county delegation pass the unification bill. Mr. DelGiudice introduced the resolution to the council.

**Jan. 12, 1994:** A new citizens' group, "One Takoma," organizes to push the unification bill and sets a \$3,000 fundraising goal to print and mail fliers.

**Jan. 23:** One Takoma stages a rally and fundraiser at CASA de Maryland on Tulip Avenue. State and county officials express optimism that this year the unification has its best chance ever. One Takoma has raised \$2,200; turquoise T-shirts are big sellers.

**Jan. 24:** The mayor, city councilmembers and One Takoma organizers lead a car caravan to Annapolis to lobby for the unification bill. They target the 24 members of the Prince George's County delegation and One Takoma's phone chains inundate delegates' offices with calls for unification, especially eight members of the Prince George's Bi-County Committee. The group works to get candidates for Prince George's County executive to pledge support.

**Feb. 8:** The Montgomery County Council and the Prince George's Bi-County Committee recommend passage of the bill for a unification referendum.

**Feb. 17:** The Prince George's County Municipal Association supports the bill.

**Feb. 18:** Prince George's delegates vote 18-4 for the unification bill. They add an amendment to require Montgomery to pay non-resident tuition for any P.G. students who want to stay at their P.G. County school.

**Feb. 19:** The Washington Post quotes Mr. Hart as saying that Mr. Glendening is

still opposed to unification because it would set a bad precedent for other split cities but that Mr. Glendening, a candidate for governor, will stay out of all but the most significant legislative battles this year.

**March:** The Montgomery County Bi-County Committee favors the bill with two amendments -- to change implementation to July 1, 1997, and to require the city to hold and pay for the referendum and that only U.S. citizens, not resident aliens, may vote.

**March 4:** The Montgomery County delegation unanimously favors the bill with the amendments and the P.G. delegation votes favorably on the amendments.

**March 14:** The unification bill passes 134-1 in the House of Delegates.

**April 6:** P.G. senators pass the bill 5-2. They drop a proposal for a non-binding poll of all P.G. residents. Mr. Dorman had asked Senate President Mike Miller to let the bill pass as a personal favor and Bea Tignor, Mr. Miller's favored candidate for P.G. county executive, had told Mr. Miller that his help on the bill would help her win votes in Takoma Park.

**April 8:** The unification bill (House bill 1090) passes in the Senate, 33-2.

**May 19:** Gov. William Donald Schaefer signs the bill into law.

**February 1995:** One Takoma members vote to end their neutrality on unification and campaign openly for unification into Montgomery County. They plan education on three issues affected by unification: schools, tax rebates from Montgomery County, city administration.

**March:** One Takoma adopts principles to guide its campaign to unify Takoma Park in Montgomery County: excellence in public schools, effectiveness in city government, equitable rebates from Montgomery County, a smooth transition to protect the rights of residents in both Prince George's and Montgomery counties.

**July:** The city annexes about 90 acres and 800 new residents on its southmost corner in unincorporated Prince George's County. The action is challenged and a referendum on the annexation is required.

**Aug. 22:** Referenda on city annexation are held in Hampshire Knolls, Pinecrest and Westmoreland neighborhoods. The annexation passes 219-94 and annexation takes effect Sept. 5 so newly annexed residents can vote in the Nov. 7 referendum to unify the city into Montgomery County.

**Sept. 21:** The city holds a public forum on unification, sponsored by Takoma Park Democrats United. A big concern is schools and potential overcrowding. About 600 Prince George's students will be eligible to go to Montgomery schools if voters choose to unite the city in Montgomery County.

**Nov. 5:** Residents vote for unification into Montgomery County, 2,382-272 in a translation of the odd ballots that ask P.G. residents if they want to unite in Montgomery County and ask Montgomery residents if they want to join Prince George's. On the Montgomery side, the vote is 1,254-116 to stay put. Prince George's voters favor unification in Montgomery 1,128-156.

City voters also return the mayor and six council members to office. All ran unopposed. Turnout is about 32 percent of the 8,200 city voters and voting is particularly strong in the P.G. wards.

**February 1996:** Montgomery County Public Schools starts surveying Prince George's city residents to plan for new students from Takoma Park.

**July 1, 1997:** Takoma Park is unified into Montgomery County.